

amendments thereto is provided at Appendix A.

The Examiner also has rejected all claims under consideration as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,704,115 to Buell. Because Buell does not disclose or suggest all of the recitations of the pending claims, inherently or otherwise, the Examiner's rejections should be withdrawn.

In particular, claim 1 recites a "longitudinally extending side margin extending laterally outboard from [a] location" of connection between a bodyside surface of the body panel and the absorbent composite. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Buell does not have a side margin that extends *outwardly from the attachment location* between the body member 22 and the front and rear half belts 26, 31, or the end stub belts 23, 24, 28, 29 making up such half belts. Instead, as shown in FIGS. 7 and 8, the backsheet 41 of the body member 22 is secured to the rear half-belt 31 along the entire lateral width of the body member up to the proximal edge 71 (see FIGS. 7 and 8; Col. 5, lines 62-64 and Col. 7, lines 53-55; Col. 4, lines 14-17 (The "narrow body members . . . are fitted with *inwardly* facing side-edge-leakage-guard gutters having elasticized distal edges.")). This is the same type of garment that Applicants described in the background of the present application (page 1, lines 18-24) and distinguished with the pending claims.

Moreover, as shown in FIGS. 2, 7 and 11a, Buell expressly discloses that with respect to the portion of the body member overlying the front and rear half belts, the side margins or guard guides 45 and 46 are actually bonded to the topsheet 40 along adhesive area 76 so as to *prevent* them from extending outboard from the edge 71 (Col. 4, line 60 to Col. 5, line 26). The adhesive area 76 runs to the edge of the body member 22 as shown in FIGS. 2 and 7, and the guards are therefore incapable of being unfolded laterally outwardly (Col. 5, lines 8-18).

Accordingly, claim 1, which has not been amended, is patentable over Buell. Applicants have amended claims 14 and 24 to similarly define over Buell and are therefore patentable for the same reasons. Accordingly, all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

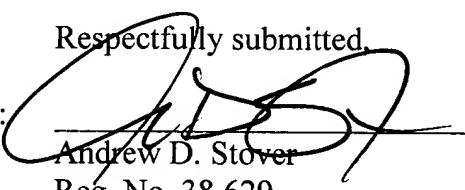
Finally, the Examiner has made a provisional, obviousness-type double patenting rejection of all claims in view of claims pending in U.S. Application No. 10/053,251. Applicants will address this rejection once the claims of one or both of the pending applications are otherwise allowed.

CONCLUSION:

If for any reason this application is not considered to be in condition for allowance and an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4713.

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By:

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